NEWS ANALYSIS NR. 1-1122 JULY 19, 1976
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NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE PROBLEMS

ANNCR: VOA NEWS ANALYST RONALD J. DUNLAVEY DISCUSSES SOME OF THE PROBLEMS FACING THE ECONOMIC CONFERENCE IN PARIS BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL AND DEVELOPING NATIONS:

VOICE: THE FOUR COMMISSIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION HAVE BEEN MEETING IN PARIS, TRYING TO SET UP A PROGRAM FOR NEGOTIATIONS BEGINNING IN SEPTEMBER. BUT THEY HAVE RUN INTO DIFFICULTIES, AND SUSPENDED THEIR CONSULTATIONS SATURDAY ON A NOTE OF DISAGREEMENT.

AT A THREE MONTHS MEETING, BEGINNING IN SEPTEMBER, THE COMMISSIONS ARE SUPPOSED TO REACH AGREEMENTS WHICH WILL BE FINALIZED AT A HIGH-LEVEL MINISTERIAL MEETING IN DECEMBER. BUT THEY HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO AGREE ON A WORKING PROGRAM, AND HAVE DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT THE LANGUAGE DEFINING THEIR ROLE. THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, IT IS REPORTED, SEE THE COMMISSIONS AS HAVING THE POWER TO MAKE FAR-REACHING DECISIONS; THE INDUSTRIAL NATIONS -- OR AT LEAST SOME OF THEM -- BELIEVE THAT SUCH DECISIONS SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN DECEMBER. THE PARTICULAR ISSUES AROUND WHICH THE CONTROVERSY HAS DEVELOPED ARE, FIRST, THE PROBLEM OF CANCELLATION OF DEBTS OF SOME OF THE POOREST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND SECOND, THE PROBLEM OF RELATING THE PRICE OF RAW MATERIALS TO INFLATION IN THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD. THESE ARE TWO ISSUES ON WHICH THE DEVELOPING NATIONS WOULD LIKE A FIRM COMMITMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. BUT THEY ARE ALSO, IN THE VIEW OF THE INDUSTRIAL POWERS, OF SUCH PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE THAT THEY MUST BE NEGOTIATED IN THE COMMISSIONS WITHOUT THE FRAMEWORK OF THE NEGOTIATIONS PREJUDGING THE RESULT. (OPT) A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

ACCUSED THE INDUSTRIAL NATIONS OF WHAT HE CALLED LACK OF "POLITICAL WILL." THE INDUSTRIAL NATIONS' REPLY IS THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO TAKE PART IN CONSTRUCTIVE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT THAT THE OUTCOME CANNOT BE DETERMINED IN ADVANCE. (END OPT)

THE IMPASSE HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS THE MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM THE CONFERENCE HAS ENCOUNTERED SINCE IT WAS LAUNCHED LAST FEBRUARY. HOWEVER, MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THE DIFFERENCE OF OPINION CAN AND WILL BE RESOLVED. THEY POINT OUT THAT AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON ALL OTHER ISSUES, AND THAT STRENUOUS EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO SETTLE THESE SO THAT THE TIMETABLE FOR THE COMMISSIONS CAN BE ADHERED TO IN SEPTEMBER. IN SPITE OF ITS NUMEROUS DIFFICULTIES -- INCLUDING A VERY PAINFUL PERIOD OF PREPARATION -- THE PARIS CONFERENCE HAS BEEN MARKED RIGHT ALONG BY A SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE. THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT IT WILL NOT CONTINUE TO PREVAIL.

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